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Committee on Conferences
Substantive session of 2000

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Peter **Van De Velde** (Belgium)

V. Review of the procedure on the participation of observers

Introduction and overview

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 53/208 A of 18 December 1998, invited the Committee on Conferences to consider the question of the participation of observers in the work of the Committee in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure of the Assembly.

2. At its 423rd meeting, on 1 September 1999, the Committee agreed on the following procedure regarding the participation of observers in the work of the Committee:

(a) An announcement would be made in the *Journal*, sufficiently in advance of a meeting of the Committee, to the effect that non-members were invited to participate as observers by sending a request in writing to the secretariat of the Committee on Conferences;

(b) On the basis of the written request, the secretariat would reserve a seat with the nameplate of each observer;

(c) Observers would be allowed to make one statement on each item on the agenda of the Committee. The length of the statement by each observer would be limited in accordance with the practices normally followed for the organization of special sessions of the General Assembly;

(d) The above-mentioned procedure would be indicated to the observers at the time that the secretariat responded to the written request for participation. In this context, the composition of the Committee on Conferences, as set out in section B, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 43/222 of 21 December 1988, would be reiterated.

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3. At its organizational session, on 27 April 2000 (427th meeting), the Committee reviewed the current procedure and decided to do so again at its substantive session.

4. At its 432nd meeting, on 8 August 2000, the Committee reviewed the procedure. It was informed that announcements had been placed in the *Journal* sufficiently in advance of meetings of the Committee inviting non-members to participate as observers, and that the secretariat had received three written requests from Member States to participate as observers at its meetings since 1 September 1999. No observers had participated in the work of the Committee during its 2000 substantive session. The Committee decided that the procedure should remain in place and that it need not be reviewed further.